

Prescription Safety Data Leave Behind Document

- The number of drug overdose deaths in Tennessee rose from 422 in 2001 to 1,059 in 2010, the vast majority being unintentional. In the last 10 years, more than 8,000 Tennesseans have died from drug overdoses.
- In 2010, there were more deaths in Tennessee due to drug overdoses than from motor vehicle traffic accidents, homicide or suicide.
- Contributing to this problem is the fact that, in 2010, Tennessee was the second leading state in pounds of opiate pain reliever drugs sold (26 pounds of opioid pain relievers per 10,000 persons in TN compared to 15.7 pounds of opioid pain relievers per 10,000 persons in the rest of the United States).
- Almost 250,000 Tennesseans (older than 12) reported abusing prescription opioids in 2009.
- Not surprisingly, in 2010, prescription opioids ranked as the number one abused drug among consumers receiving state-funded treatment services in Tennessee.
- As a result, the number of treatment admissions for prescription opioids in Tennessee for 2010 (3,331 admissions) has increased by more than eightfold since the year 2000 (416 admissions).
- **Perspective:** The top three drugs abused among those who receive state-funded treatment in Tennessee has changed dramatically from 2000 to 2010. In 2000, admissions for cocaine/crack (23%) and marijuana (15%) far exceeded prescription opioids (5%). In 2010, --in an almost a complete reversal-- admissions for prescription opioids (28%) exceeded admissions for cocaine/crack (12%) and marijuana (17%).
- **Further Perspective:** The percentage of treatment admissions due to prescription opioids jumped from 5% to 28% in Tennessee from 2000 to 2010. This represents an increase of 23 percentage points among admissions for prescription opioid abuse over an 11 year period. Compare this to an increase of 7 percentage points (1% in 2000 to 8% in 2010) on a national level during this same period and Tennessee's prescription opioid abuse epidemic becomes painstakingly clear.